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INFORMATION REPORT

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1. The situation in Czech Communist Party headquarters changes daily. There seems to be complete chaos even in lower level committees. Old Party members are resigning. Some Party members are glad that Rudolf Slansky was arrested and hope that as a result his radical methods will be replaced by more moderate action. Other members believe that the Russians will take over complete control of Czechoslovakia. No one believes that Slansky was an anti-Soviet spy, but rather a Soviet agent who failed. On the day of Slansky's arrest one hundred leading Party dignitaries in Prague were arrested, most of them Political Secretaries of District Party Committees who had backed Slansky's policies.
2. The positions of President Klement Gottwald and Prime Minister Antonin Zapotocky are considered insecure. It is rumored that the Kremlin no longer trusts Gottwald and may soon call him to Moscow where he will be detained on the pretense of illness and a rest cure.* It is also rumored that Minister of National Defense Alexej Cepicka will be removed from office on orders from the Kremlin and against Gottwald's wishes. The reasons for his possible removal are given as the fact that he is Gottwald's son-in-law and that not even in the USSR are close relatives allowed to hold such important positions in the Party and the Government, and that he is unpopular with the Kremlin and with the Czech people.**
3. Antonin Novotny, the Secretary General of the Regional Party Committee in Prague, is assuming the position of Josef Krosnar as Chairman of the same committee with increased powers. A new step is being taken toward centralization by means of the institution of political secretaries of Party National Committees at all levels.

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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4. An increasing number of Soviet officers are now in controlling positions in the Czechoslovak Army and control reaches to lower levels than previously. A Soviet major is the commanding officer of the new Army training center in Hradec Kralove (051/G71).
5. Many large hospitals are coming under military control. Bulovka, the main hospital in Prague, underwent a general staff inspection under a Soviet specialist. Later, a member of the inspection staff was placed in a position in the hospital management. Nursing courses in Liberec and Hradec Kralove were recently interrupted and the students sent home because the Army had taken over the hospitals. Many Prague doctors have been ordered to report in case of emergency to various hospitals in and outside of Prague.

* Comment: It has been reported that Soviet Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Valerian A. Zorin and the physician who treated former Bulgarian Prime Minister Georgi Dimitrov before his death are in Prague and have visited Gottwald, who is reported to be sick.

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*** Comment: If this argument is valid, there will be a widespread removal of personnel from high positions since there are a large number of close relationships among Party and Government personnel. Unpopularity with the Czech people was also given as a reason for the removal of Slansky.

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